

REFLECTIONS upon George Keith's late ADVERTISEMENT of.

A Meeting to be held by him and his Friends, at Turner's-Hall on the Eleventh of the Fourth Month, 1696. to which he saith, William Penn, Thomas Ellwood, George Whitehead, John Penington, and the Second Days Weekly Meeting at London, called Quakers, are justly desired to be present, to hear themselves Charged, &c.

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Though I might here justly except against the Constitution of the Meeting, the Authority and Warrantableness of his peremptory Summons, the Reasonableness as well as Seasonableness of the Demand, &c. yet being willing to pursue Method, though I have no good Example before me, I shall first take Cognizance of what G. K. Alligns, under several Heads, as the Basis of his Proposed, as well as *Imposed* Debate. If they are not of Weight, or Agreeable to the Structure raised, a Summary at the close may suffice, that I dilate not the Controversy unnecessarily.

His First Article is, *That W. Penn hath accused him in a publick Meeting at Ratcliff, of being an Apostle, and Impostor, and endeavouring to pluck up the Testimony of Truth by the Roots.* To which I say, Had not his Apostacy been sufficiently proved, even by himself, in the Scene of his Transactions, both Private and Publick, since his last coming into England; yet inasmuch as those several Apologetical Tracts (written by Tho. Ellwood, Caleb Pusey and my self, Entituled, *A farther Discrevity, Truth Defended, A Modest Account, An Apostle Expos'd*, to two of which (viz. those of T. E's) he tells us, in his Postscript to a late Pamphlet, Stiled, *Gross Error, It is probable a due Answer may be given in due time*) remain as yet unanswered by him, the Charge lies upon him, and the Proof at his Door, not to be supplied by a *Verbal Conference in a Corner*, as the most publick Disputes are, in comparison of the Press. The Name *Impostor*, I remember not to have heard made part of the Charge till now, yet if he will consult his Dictionary, as he once did upon the calling of a Friend *Impudent Rascal*, he may find it denotes a *Deceiver*. But the Name I fear more offends him than the Nature; yet that, and his endeavouring to pluck up the Testimony of Truth by the Roots, as they suit with his Actions, so have they been in Print proved upon him in the above recited and other Treatises.

Not will his pretence in the succeeding lines, *That W. P. promised to answer him (before many Witnesses) when G. K. told him, he thought to put him to prove his Charge in the Face of the Nation, stand him in any stead; for that he may yet do, when G. K. makes the onset.* Is he so idle to think a Provocation to meet him at *Turners-Hall*, is a putting him to prove his Charge in the *Face of the Nation*? What beadds as a Charge against W. P. out of his Books, I refer till I come to this Third Head, wherein he objects the same against G. W.

He goes on to a Secondly, *Whereas Thomas Ellwood hath printed sundry Defamatory Books against me, I charge him to be guilty of false Accusations, &c. Then to a Thirdly against G. W. of which more aton; so to a Fourthly against me, for printing*

printing (as he alledges) *Defamatory Books* against him, and accusing (he should have added proving too, for that was also done) him to be an *Apostate*; &c. and Fifthly, against the *Second Days Weekly Meeting* at London, for approving or countenancing those Books, and another signed by *Caleb Pusey* (of which above) and then Declares, if it happen that *few* or *NONE* of us be present at the said Meeting, being conscious (as he saith) of the badness of our Cause, his full intention to be present with his Friends, at the said time and place, to make good the Charge against us, to which he allows any moderate and friendly people of other Professions to be present, so far as there is room without Crowding. And is all this busie, I pray, to answer or evade our Charge? In what time doth he propose to enervate so many Quotations, Arguments, Deductions, Instances, &c. out of his and others Books, to shew the fallacy of the one, the inconsistency of the other; the Perversions, Forgeries, false Accusations, &c. when those very Books of *T. E.*'s (not to mention the rest) which he hath given some faint Expectation he would Answer, are above Eighteen Sheets of large Paper, close Printed? Is this Man in *Earnest*, or doth he think any Judicious Man can take him to be so? Or doth not he rather seek to make some *Bravado*, some idle *Flourish* to slip from his Purgation? Indeed the very Title Page bespeaks some such thing, where he propogeth, not a clearing himself, but a recriminating others. He tells us, *We are justly desired to be present, so hear our selves Charged, and proved Guilty of the following things, and we shall be freely heard, to answer to our several Charges.* But stay a busie, all in good time; we are upon the *Defensys*, he upon the *Offensive* part, Defending our Friends and Society from his Repeated, Impetuous Slanders and *Defamations*, wherewith he had unjustly loaded them, and labouring to *throw off* the *Dirt* he had endeavoured to *fling on*, even while he would have laid claim to *Membership*, yea *Eldership*. And in the Prosecution hereof, when he *Calumniates*, we detect him; when he deviates from his former *Pretences* and *Principles*, we justly expose him, and declare him to be a *Deceitful*, *Apostate*, &c. having first proved it upon him. Now if he (who is the *Aggressor*) find himself aggrieved, how can he expect Relief; by falling upon us, for so charging him, or by evidencing his own *Innocency*? But his Work is a mere *empty shew*, he begins at the wrong end; instead of *discharging* himself (which he knows he can never do) he *re-charges* us, making it a *crime* in us to tell him he did amiss, though we shew wherein; for which we must (if we will answer his *Challenge*) be convened before him and his, to answer (in a Meeting of his own picking) to several general Heads, the discussing whereof, even before Competent Judges, as they would branch forth into many particulars, so perhaps (were the *Auditory* a more composed, settled Company, than this is like to be) would take up instead of a Day, Weeks to debate. And when all is done, the Controversy hitherto hath been *Bublick* in the Face of the Nation and Nations, there it will be in *Private*, in respect of what comes abroad in Print: Nor is such an Assembly like to determine the matter without the *Press*, but to renew a fresh occasion to Print, yet perhaps with this *hoped* advantage to the Proposer, that running off from that Cause he is already hampered with, and uneasie under, he may *wrangle* afresh upon some *out-skirts* of the Controversy, and drop the *Main* one. And this I take to be the designa.

His Thirdly (which I promised even now to take notice of) is levelled against Geo. Whitehead for joining with a Prevailing Party in that called the Tearly Meeting, to pass (what he calls) a most Unchristian Censure of Excommunication against him, without Proof, &c. But why is G. W. here singled out, and not the whole Prevailing Party, as he terms them, included, except that he have a more particular Pique at him?

In the same Paragraph he goes on and tells us, I offer to prove the said George Whitehead, out of some of his printed Books (which it doth not appear that he hath restrained or corrected) guilty of most Erronious and Hurtful Principles, contrary to the Fundamental Doctrine of the Christian Faith and Religion. The like he had said before of W. Penn, only with this addition, That W. P. is guilty of gross Contradiction to himself; for he is forward at Charging; when it comes to Proof, he falls short. Yet may I remind him, that two Books lie upon his Hands unanswered, which treat of this very Subject; the one written by T. E. called, *Truth Defended*; the other by my self, Entituled, *An Apostate Exposed*, in Answer to three of his, called, *Namless Bull*, *True Copy*, and *Grofs Error*. In the one they are cleared from several False Deductions, Inferences, &c. brought by G. K. to which he pretended he would give Answer, but never did yet; in the other his Quotations out of those very Books of theirs, out of which he hath since pickt Quarrels, are oposed to his later Sense, not only of the Authors, but of the very Books themselves, to which also no Answer hath been yet given. So that it is not so much his different Sense (or Opinion) of G. W. and W. P. (as he would insinuate, p. 4. Of this *Advertisement*) but even of their Books, calling that *Or. shoddy* one year, which he represents as *Introdas* another; that I was drawn to Detect and Expose. However two things occur to me from the Premises, First, That printed Books (not Retracted or Corrected) are good Evidence against G. W. and W. P. and are they not so against G. K. especially seeing he hath confessed *True Copy*, p. 17. That some of his need some further Explanation, Emendation and Correction, and promised to do it, tho' in that he keeps his word with us, as he hath hitherto done with T. E. Secondly, That it is not reasonable for him to expect his renewed Charge against G. W. and W. P. of the same Nature as the former, should be Heard and Debated in a *Sch. Assembly* of his own, when he is Debtor to two Tracts, publish'd some Month's since, where the matter hath been so handled, that he hath not thought fit to Reply. Let him fairly clear his Hands of what is *already depending*, and which he hath chose to concert in Print, and then offer new if he hath any. Till then he must excuse us, that we cannot comply with his empty and shifting Subterfuges, whereby to turn the course of the Controversy out of its due and proper Channel; whither he brought it, into an indirect one, where he would now lead us, to drown it.

What follows being mostly a catching at a passage or two out of those Books of T. E's, which he hath not attempted to Answer, I touch the lighter on, as esteemimg it an unmanly way of Treating an Opponent, in which I design not to gratifie him. And he is the more inexcusable, insinuas the odds, in his Eyes, is so great between them, G. K. being a Man, who (as he tells us in his *Serious Appeal*, p. 29. *I Hurb the Gifts both of Sound Knowledge and Expression, with manifold other Merites bestowed upon him*: T. E. on the other Hand, is represented

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by G. K. p. 3, of this Advertisement, grossly Ignorant of Human Learning, guilty of Pedantic Trifling and Quibbling. But G. K. is not the only Adversary, who hath made up in *Vain*, what he wanted in *argument*, or been forced to sink under the weight of a bad Cause. For Great is the Truth, and it doth and will prevail.

He tells us in p. 3. *He hath scilb time, no ability of outward Estate, to paye Answers to him selfe, others, that keep Book upon Book against him.* What time he hath, or how he employs it, I undertake not to determine; but he should, like a *Wise Builder*, have counted the *Cost* before he began with us, and so blame us for answering his Books, after he hath given the Provocation. Yet time was, when he took time to scribble Books very fast, and that at a time when the *Press* was in his Parties Hands; but I must confess, from the first time that he hath met with Opponents, and that he hath been purposed to prove, as well as alien, *Time or Ability* hath mightily failed him. An evi-
dence whereof he gave in his first onset, who instead of an answer to T. E. emitted an Epistle, wherein he laboured to persuade Friends to anticipate his Work, by *Calling* in T. E.'s Sheets and dil-
owing them, upon a presumption what a *Bookbinder* he was, and that he had no less than *Fifty* Ser-
vices, Forgeries and Fictions to lay to his Charge. But when that had not its propised effect, to
Condemn T. E. unheard, for his *Proof* was yet to produce, but he was obliged to prove his Answer, such as it was, more *Noise* than *Matter*, or forfeit his Credit; a Reply at length came out under the Title of *A Reasonable Information*, &c. and T. E. rejoyned in his, called, *A further Discovery*, which such lay upon G. K.'s Hands ever since, though once he told us it was probable, that another of T. E.'s called, *Truth Defended*, might be answered in due time, as hath been hinted already. But now to extricate himself, he would excuse himself from printing, for want of time and ability of Outward Estate as well as that he tell us on p. 4. that W. P.'s calling him *Apostate* hath that tendency for his faith, *Men* *Wise* and *Children* are *infected* with it, and that it tends to the exposing of them to *Ruine and War*, and he came among us for *Quakerish Ends*. If so, the disappointment is just. But if he be not a Man alone, one of no *despise*, which he is offended with T. E. for supposing, a Man would think, *So considerable a number* of Friends, wherein he would have us believe, his Testi-
mony is so well received, who have published against him and his *Christian Testimony*, and that in a print-
ed *Treatise* too, (as he alledgeth in the same place) might set to their Shoulders, and help *ease* him of his Charge, if he pleased. This makes the *noetic* *curious* to know, than they are to *himself*.

Yet something more I cannot but observe in p. 3. where finding fault with T. E. for his *Answer* (as he terms it) upon his plain words, he saith, *Let the Reader but read my Books in my own Book, and as the first sight he will see the *Cheat* and *Forgery*.* That is more than my Eyes can do at *second sight*; but to return, here he refers to his own Book, why did he not say, *Let him meet me at Turners Hall* and I will prove it? By this the ridiculousness of this Meeting sheweth it self: for a Man will readily say, *Controversy in Print is decided by Print, an Abuse or Forgery there by comparing Book with Book*; and if he thought his *Defensible*, I doubt not but he would have done it.

These short Touches I hope will satisfie the *Candid* and *Judicious*, that we are not conversed to follow him in his several Doubtles and Twiflings, but to hold him to his Task he hath taken upon himself, and that his Demand is alike *idle* as *Unreasonable*, if we consider either the *Present* *Chall* *lenging*, one that is gone off from us the *Place*, a Meeting set up in Opposition to us and our *Meetings*, which he terms in the Title Page, *Their* *USUAL* *Meeting-place*, as if it had been of some considerable duration, when perhaps two Months ago they had *were* *there*; the *Compan* he calleth *Friends*, a *Separation* out of *a Separation*, that hath defamed and pervertly exposed Friends, even when he himself was against them; the *mixt* *Andisys*, such as never were of our *Companions*, and that they will be either *Moderate* or *Friendly*, we have but his bare word for, who needs a *Proverber* for his own *Departure*, or that he either *can* or *will* *keep* out the very *Rabble*, whom his publick *Advertisment* is most likely to draw in, is a great Question; the *Peremptoriness* of the *Sixteen*, as if we were at his beck to come and go, when and whither he pleased to appoint us; the *Press*, if any *Disorder* happen, for he is none of the most *Oratory* *himself*; besides that the *Controversy*, *describ* *it*, is already in a more open, free and publick Court in *Print*, into which he drew us, and till of late hath persisted in, though somewhat faintly, as well as promised to pursue, and that a *Meeting*, the never so publick, bears no Proportion to the *Press*, where he began. The which *Candid* *Friends*, whether of weight with him or no, we dare leave with the *Only* *self*, as sufficient when occasion requireth and refuse our Compliance with his *Paroxysm* Demands.

John Pelegot.

